STORAGE PLATFORM FOR ORGANIZING, SEARCHING, AND SHARING DATA

CROSS-REFERENCE

[0001]   This application is related by subject matter to the inventions disclosed in the following commonly assigned applications: U.S. Patent Application No. (not yet assigned) (Atty. Docket No. MSFT-1748), *10/647 058* filed on even date herewith, entitled "SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR REPRESENTING UNITS OF INFORMATION MANAGEABLE BY A HARDWARE/SOFTWARE INTERFACE SYSTEM BUT INDEPENDENT OF PHYSICAL REPRESENTATION"; U.S. Patent Application No. (not yet assigned) (Atty. Docket No. MSFT-1749), filed on even date herewith, entitled *10/646 941* "SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR SEPARATING UNITS OF INFORMATION MANAGEABLE BY A HARDWARE/SOFTWARE INTERFACE SYSTEM FROM THEIR PHYSICAL ORGANIZATION"; U.S. Patent Application No. (not yet assigned) (Atty. Docket No. MSFT-1750), filed on even date herewith, *10/646 940* entitled "SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A BASE SCHEMA FOR ORGANIZING UNITS OF INFORMATION MANAGEABLE BY A HARDWARE/SOFTWARE INTERFACE SYSTEM"; U.S. Patent Application No. (not yet assigned) (Atty. Docket No. MSFT-1751), filed on even date herewith, entitled "SYSTEMS *10/646 632* AND METHODS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A CORE SCHEMA FOR PROVIDING A TOP-LEVEL STRUCTURE FOR ORGANIZING UNITS OF INFORMATION MANAGEABLE BY A HARDWARE/SOFTWARE INTERFACE SYSTEM"; U.S. Patent Application No. (not yet assigned) (Atty. Docket No. MSFT-1752), filed on even date herewith, *10/646 645* entitled "SYSTEMS AND METHOD FOR REPRESENTING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN UNITS OF INFORMATION MANAGEABLE BY A HARDWARE/SOFTWARE INTERFACE SYSTEM"; U.S. Patent Application No. (not yet assigned) (Atty. Docket No. MSFT-2733), filed on even date herewith, entitled "SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR *10/646 575* INTERFACING APPLICATION PROGRAMS WITH AN ITEM-BASED STORAGE PLATFORM"; and U.S. Patent Application No. (not yet assigned) (Atty. Docket No. MSFT-___ *10/646 580*

2735), filed on even date herewith, entitled "SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR DATA MODELING IN AN ITEM-BASED STORAGE PLATFORM".

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates generally to the field of information storage and retrieval, and, more particularly, to an active storage platform for organizing, searching, and sharing different types of data in a computerized system.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Individual disk capacity has been growing at roughly seventy percent (70%) per year over the last decade. Moore's law accurately predicted the tremendous gains in central processing unit (CPU) power that has occurred over the years. Wired and wireless technologies have provided tremendous connectivity and bandwidth. Presuming current trends continue, within several years the average laptop computer will possess roughly one terabyte (TB) of storage and contain millions of files, and 500 gigabyte (GB) drives will become commonplace.

[0004] Consumers use their computers primarily for communication and organizing personal information, whether it is traditional personal information manager (PIM) style data or media such as digital music or photographs. The amount of digital content, and the ability to store the raw bytes, has increased tremendously; however the methods available to consumers for organizing and unifying this data has not kept pace. Knowledge workers spend enormous amounts of time managing and sharing information, and some studies estimate that knowledge workers spend 15-25% of their time on non-productive information related activities. Other studies estimate that a typical knowledge worker spends about 2.5 hours per day searching for information.

[0005] Developers and information technology (IT) departments invest significant amounts of time and money in building their own data stores for common storage abstractions to represent such things as people, places, times, and events. Not only does this result in duplicated work, but it also creates islands of common data with no mechanisms for common searching or sharing of that data. Just consider how many address books can exist today on a computer running the Microsoft Windows operating system. Many applications, such as e-mail clients and personal finance programs, keep individual address books, and there is little sharing among